be taken as evidence that these forms of it were native to that region; but it must be remembered that the people of Southeast Asia also migrated to the South Indian Ocean region - to Mauritius, Madagascar and the East Coast of Africa. Furthermore, it is a well-established fact that there were trade relations between India and Malaysia and the islands of the South Indian Ocean and the East Coast of Africa, as well, over four thousand years ago. Therefore, it could be possible that the South Indian Ocean area is the ancestral home of the hibiscus that came to be known as H. rosa-sinensis. Support of this theory could also be drawn from the fact that an analysis of the origin of members of this very large genus will show that the number of endemic species of hibiscus found in the South Indian Ocean area is much larger than that found in Southeast Asia, particularly species cross-compatible with the many forms of H. rosa-sinensis.

The known species not only compatible in making interspecific crosses but with all forms of H. rosa-sinensis are: H. schizopetalus, an African East Coast species; H. liliflorus and H. fragilia (and possibly H. genevii) from Mauritius; H. arnottianus (several forms) and H. kokio from Hawaii; and H. storckii from Fiji. Most authorities agree that from these recognized species - and perhaps some yet undetermined additional species - all forms accepted as representing H. rosa-sinensis have evolved. It is quite possible, too, that among the many forms of hibiscus currently considered under H. rosa-sinensis there may be some that are, in fact, true species which will eventually become separable from this complex when it is understood more fully. I have collected a large number of varieties in many parts of the world in recent years, and chromosome counts and other studies are being made. Results so far indicate that Skovsted's reference to H. rosa-sinensis as being "a mixed collection of highly polyploid hybrids" is correct!

Any discussion of the species used in hibiscus

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hybridization should include mention of H. cameronii, native of Madagascar. Due to an early error in publishing, this species has been confused with a common form of H. rosa-sinensis and thus accepted in several important reference works as one of the components involved in H. rosa-sinensis. In fact, this "pseudo-cameronii" was the primary basis of one extensive hybridization project in India, and it was used freely in Hawaii in the early days. But insofar as known, true H. cameronii has not been successfully crossed with H. rosa-sinensis or with any of the species with which we have been working - although the cross has been attempted by many hybridizers, including the writer.

Also, there is still some doubt as to whether the endemic Fijian species, H. storckii, can still be found in cultivation, and how much it was used in early years by hybridizers. As you know, I have visited Fiji twice and made an effort to find this species in the wild, or in garden plantings; and last autumn in London, I was able to examine the original herberium specimen of H. storckii sent to Kew by Berthold Seemann, in 1865. This species was found, described and named by Seemann. On my recent visit (last December) to Fiji, I collected three forms which appear to be quite close to the Seemann specimen; these will be studied during the next few years. It may be that H. storckii, like the native Hawaiian white and reds, was found in several forms in the wild, and natural within-species variations provide this spectrum.

One of these forms seems to be synonymous with H. denisonii, which I secured in England several years ago as a cutting, and later as seed from the Osaka Botanical Garden in Japan. Bailey's Standard Cyclopedia of Horticulture refers to H. denisonii as a species of unknown origin brought to England from Australia, about 1870. It was first grown at Kew (progeny of the origianl plants are still there) and had a brief

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